

## Fairview Elementary

Fairview Elementary school is one of nineteen elementary schools in the Columbia Public School district in Columbia, Missouri. The school opened on September 7, 1965, with an enrollment of 175 students and was staffed by seven teachers. Dr. James N. Wells was appointed as the first principal of Fairview School. The Missouri State commission commended Fairview Elementary school as *One of the Nation's Most Outstanding Schools* on August 12, 1986, with President Ronald Reagan personally visiting. Mrs. Elaine Hassemer was appointed as Fairview's next principal in 1998. In 2001, Fairview was named a *Missouri Gold Star School* and a *National Blue Ribbon School*. By 2001, Fairview's enrollment had grown to 900 students, served 65 teachers and 29 support staff. The increased growth prompted the district's Board of education to propose the building of another elementary school to alleviate burgeoning enrollment at Fairview. A new school was built, and in the 2002-03 school year, half of the Fairview student body and teachers were re-assigned to the new school. Mr. Ben Tilley was promoted from Fairview's assistant principal to principal. Currently, Fairview's population consists of 550 students, 44 teachers, and 29 support staff serving pre-kindergarten students through grade five.

Over the past five years, Fairview has continued to sustain high test scores while student demographics have changed. During the 2000-01 school year, the school's free/reduced lunches population was 7.4%. Currently this statistic stands at 21.2%. The school has also experienced increases in students qualifying for Special Education services, students eligible as English Language Learners, and in the African-American population. Even though classroom size has risen, the school consistently scores well on standardized tests.

Fairview teachers have had a long history of engaging in research-based activities that help to sustain high achievement scores. Teachers study and model the nuances of Professional Learning Communities. Action Research is used to help teachers meet the needs of all learners. Positive Behavior support, a program which focuses on teaching students specific behavioral strategies, has been implemented. Fairview Elementary, along with three other elementary schools embarked on a study of gender differences during the 2006-07 school year. New technology such as SMART Boards, MIMIO, Blackboard, Curriculum Tracker, and the Data Warehouse have been utilized to give teachers the tools that they need in order to meet a variety of teaching challenges.

To aid in student achievement and involvement, Fairview teachers sponsor many extra-curricular activities. These include: choir, Library Club, Math Club, Mark Twain Club, Quiz Bowl, mini-courses, mentor groups, Lunch Bunch, and Columbia Square Holiday event. The Columbia square Holiday Event helps foster community spirit, and is an opportunity for "at promise" students to give as opposed to received. Fairview also hosts the Regional Missouri Council of Teachers of Mathematics math contest. Businesses throughout the community partner with Fairview in an effort to promote meaningful learning and help students make connections to the business world.

In addition to business partners, Fairview has developed a partnership with the university of Missouri-Columbia. Teachers host pre-service students and serve as mentors and supervising teachers for students participating in the University teaching fellowship Program. The rigorous MU Teaching fellowship Program provides first-year teachers the opportunity to work and study with a full-time mentor and complete a master's degree the first year teaching experience.

Parents play a key role in the success of Fairview students. Parents are actively involved in the Parent/Teacher Association and participate in volunteer activities such as fundraising, assisting teachers with clerical tasks, and performing library and bookroom services. Parents and teachers collaborate to create a positive learning environment through parent/teacher conference (100% participation), brown bag lunches, book bashes, writing celebrations, holiday open house, and classroom research presentations.

Fairview has a history rich with success in student achievement. The Quiz Bowl Team is ranked first nationally. Students are also involved in competitions such as the Tribune Spelling Bee, Missouri Teachers of Mathematics contest, and the National Geographic Geography Bee. Students are continually given the opportunity to excel as the staff questions, reflects, and examines ways to improve. Faculty view each day as an opportunity to assist each child to reach his/her potential. A caring atmosphere permeates the school culture and creates an environment where success is valued and fosters.